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In 344
Housekeepers' Chat

Friday, February 15, 1929.

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

Subject: "Dish Washing Up to Date." Menu and Recipes from Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. D. A.

Bulletins available: "Aunt Sammy's Radio Recipes," "Aunt Sammy's Radio Record."

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A dishmop by the kitchen sink may be only a dishmop in some parts of the country. But in the state of Ohio -- in five counties of the state of Ohio -- a dishmop, along with a pressure cooker, is more popular than any other kitchen utensil.

A friend of mine, who keeps me posted about affairs in the extension service of the Ohio State university, writes me about an intensive kitchen-improvement campaign, held in the farm homes of five Ohio counties last year. Forty dishmops and forty pressure cookers were bought by the farm women who improved their kitchens.

Did you ever know a woman who actually liked to wash dishes? I have -- a few -- a very few. Oh, of course there are women who like to wash china, and glassware, and silverware. But I'm talking about a real old-fashioned dish-washing, from thin glass tumblers to thick iron skilletts.

Did you ever know a woman who liked to wash greasy skilletts, and pans which have breakfast cereal clinging to them? Mixing bowls aren't any fun either -- especially if they have hardened egg on the inside.

No wonder we used to get discouraged, when we came to the pots and pans; nor is it any wonder that forty women in the Ohio kitchen-improvement campaign realized the importance of a mop which would make dish-washing easier.

To get back to the pots and pans, they really aren't such formidable objects, after they have been soaked for a while. Put them to soak, as soon as they are emptied. If there's any good fat left in the skillet, pour it out, and save it. Every little bit of thrift helps the vacation column in the budget.

Wipe the greasy pans with a piece of paper, and then fill them with hot water; add a little soap powder or soda to cut the grease, and you'll be surprised how easy they are to clean.

Scrape all the pots and pans before putting them to soak. Use hot water for the sugary dishes, and cold water for the egg and milk dishes. If food is burned on to them, use steel wool or a stiff brush and scouring powder, after the dish has been soaked for a while. Whenever I have time, I wash the pots and pans just before I serve dinner, so that the kitchen won't be such a forbidding place after dinner.

While we're on the subject of pots and pans -- a specialist on kitchens suggests that we throw away the pots and kettles which are no longer any use to us.

"If old cooking utensils," she says, "past their period of usefulness, are thrown away, rather than retired to a far corner of the kitchen shelves, the housewife will find her kitchen a more efficient workshop.

"In these days of small kitchens, no shelf or storage space can well be given up as a home for old utensils. The systematic housewife keeps on hand only those in good working order, which she really needs. Others take up valuable room, collect dust, and make extra work at housecleaning time. At least a yearly weeding out of the kitchen utensils will pay. Old or broken utensils, basins, kettles, dippers, and odds-and-ends no longer useful should be discarded.

"The remaining articles can then be arranged for efficiency; those in constant demand every day should be kept near the sink or the range or wherever they are most needed. Knives, spoons, frying pans, kettles, kettle covers, and so forth should be where the cook can put her hands on them quickly."

And speaking of cooks -- let me tell you what we're planning for Sunday dinner. A choice baked ham, crusted with browned sugar, studded with cloves, redolent of the spicy pan gravy with which it was basted. Could anything be more intriguing, for a Sunday company dinner, than a savory baked ham?

Here's the menu, for Sunday dinner: Baked Ham; Scalloped Sweet Potatoes and Pineapple; Cauliflower, or Quick-cooked Cabbage; Lettuce Salad with Roquefort Dressing; Whole Wheat Crackers; Apple and Raisin Tarts.

There are directions in the Radio Cookbook for baking a ham -- very explicit directions. But the Radio Cookbook does not say anything about using a roast meat thermometer, and nowadays the best cooks use thermometers, in cooking meats. The thermometer helps to prevent overcooking, poor appearance and unnecessary shrinkage.

Whether a ham is to be boiled or baked, it cooks more rapidly and shrinks less when the rind is left on. Make a tiny slit, with a sharp knife or a steel skewer, and insert the roast meat thermometer through the rind, into the center of the thickest part of the ham. Before baking a ham, soak it overnight in water to cover. Place it on a rack, in an open pan, and bake in a slow oven (260 degrees Fahrenheit), until the thermometer in the meat registers 160 degrees F. Take off the rind, score the fat, coat with the brown sugar mixture, and return to the oven. Whether boiled or baked, the time required for the ham to reach 160 degrees F. will be about 25 minutes to the pound.

With our baked ham, we are serving Scalloped Sweet Potatoes and Pineapple. I've given the recipe for Scalloped Sweet Potatoes and Pineapple before, but it's worth repeating. Four ingredients, for Sweet Potatoes and Pineapple:

3 medium-sized sweet potatoes	4 tablespoons melted butter, and
1 can crushed pineapple	1/4 teaspoon salt

Select a dry mealy variety of sweet potato. Cook the potatoes in the skins, in water to cover. When tender, scrape, cut in slices or rounds of uniform thickness, and place on a flat buttered baking dish. Pour the pineapple over the potato, sprinkle with salt, and add the butter. Bake in a medium oven, until light brown on the surface, and the sirup of the pineapple has become thickened. Serve from the dish in which cooked.

The lettuce salad has a Roquefort dressing -- that is, a French dressing, with crumbled up Roquefort cheese in it. Whole-wheat crackers are good with this salad.

The Apple and Raisin Tarts are pastry shells, with a filling of apple-sauce and raisins. Garnish with whipped cream, if you like.

To repeat the menu: Baked Ham; Scalloped Sweet Potatoes and Pineapple; Cauliflower; or Quick-Cooked Cabbage; Lettuce Salad with Roquefort Dressing; Whole-wheat Crackers; Apple and Raisin Tarts.

Monday: "Planning the Kitchen Garden."

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